



# PRESS RELEASE

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## **U.S. Embassy Hosts Afghanistan's First National Commercial Arbitration Moot Court Competition**

**KABUL, AFGHANISTAN** – The United States Agency for International Development (USAID) and United States Department of Commerce hosted Afghanistan's first national moot court competition for international commercial arbitration from January 31 to February 2, 2015.

Six teams from three universities – American University of Afghanistan (AUAF), Kabul University, and Kardan University – competed in the First Afghanistan National Willem C. Vis International Commercial Arbitration Moot (Vis Moot). Held at the U.S. Embassy in Kabul, the debate focused on the international sale of goods, contract law, and resolving disputes through commercial arbitration.

"The Commercial Law Development Program is helping to train the next generation of Afghan leaders, skilled legal professionals with advocacy experience. The perseverance of these students – and the months of training they spent preparing for this competition – is evident in their exemplary performance today and indicative of their future successes," said U.S. Ambassador to Afghanistan P. Michael McKinley.

At a post-debate ceremony, Ambassador McKinley awarded a trophy to members of the winning team from AUAF. The Afghan teams will advance to the Willem C. Vis International Commercial Arbitration Moot competition in Hong Kong in March, one of the most prestigious competitions and training opportunities for law students from around the world.

In 2014, Kabul University sent a team of Afghan students to participate in an international commercial law moot court competition for the first time. The program has now expanded to include two additional universities: AUAF and Kardan University.

The competition was supported through the U.S. Department of Commerce Commercial Law Development Program (CLDP), which is funded by USAID. CLDP aims to improve the business legal environment in Afghanistan and encourage students to pursue careers in the legal profession.

The \$7 million, two-year program is a continuation of a previous \$5 million USAID-supported CLDP program which began in September 2012. Afghanistan's CLDP program is one of 40 CLDP programs supported by USAID worldwide.

For more information about USAID's programs and interview requests, please contact [KabulAIDdoc@usaid.gov](mailto:KabulAIDdoc@usaid.gov) or visit <http://www.usaid.gov/Afghanistan>

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*The American people, through the U.S. Agency for International Development, have provided economic and humanitarian assistance worldwide for more than 50 years."*



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